

Title | The Shepherd of the Sheep**Text | John 10:1-6**

From the series, The Gospel of John: The Good Shepherd

1

Jesus' audience is mentioned in verse 6 as "they" and "them." Who are these people? Consider the previous chapter, and the following verses 19-21 of this chapter. How does knowing his audience better help you interpret this passage?

2

In verses 1-5 Jesus uses a "figure of speech" (v. 6) — a metaphor, and as a result, "they do not understand." What is Jesus talking about in these verses? Who are the sheep, and the shepherd? What other characters are mentioned?

3

The "gatekeeper" is an interesting character in this metaphor. The word is only used three other times in the NT (Mark 13:34; John 18:16, 17). Who is this, why is he important and what is his role?

4

This five-fold mention of "sheep" (10:1-5) is the first significant mention in the Gospel (cf. 2:14-15; 5:2). What do you know about sheep, and how they interact with their shepherd? What OT and NT passages help you develop a biblical theology of sheep?

5

The shepherd's "voice" (v. 4-5) gets the sheep's attention. They follow a sound, not an image or instrument. What deductions can we make for the Christian life? How then should we expect Jesus to lead his people, and how would we hear him?

6

A stark contrast is made between the "thief" who is a "robber" (v. 1) and that of the "shepherd." (v. 2) Can you note the differences between them? What actions, and perhaps motives, stand out as obvious?

7

The word "shepherd" is the Greek word *poimēn* (Gk. ποιμήν) used also to describe a shepherd of a local church congregation. (Eph. 4:11; 1 Peter 5:4) How does this passage in John's Gospel help you frame an understanding of pastoral ministry?